

# The Customer Experience: On-Line Services

The following comments were submitted by survey respondents to the following optional question, **“What, if anything, would you like to share about your on-line experience?”**

In total, 236 respondents submitted comments. A handful of comments were omitted as they were not relevant or non-responsive to the question. After review of the submitted comments, it was determined that each falls within one or more of the following categories:

1. Positive Comments Regarding the On-line System and Ease of Use
2. Requests to Expand Service Offerings or Service Needs Not Met
3. Requests to Modify Software to Address Particular User Needs
4. Negative Comments Regarding System, Clarity, and Ease of Use
5. Negative Comments Regarding the Related Process, Staff, and Contacting Staff
6. Miscellaneous Comments and Recommendations for Policy Changes

These comments have been grouped into these categories to facilitate review. The comments below, however, have not been modified from the original entry by the respondent. It should be noted that, for privacy purposes, some comments were hidden (e.g., names and phone numbers).

## **Positive Comments Regarding the On-line System and Ease of Use**

Actually the licensed plumber sought the permit, not I. The work was done and inspected in a timely fashion and I am satisfied.

Beats the heck out of travelling downtown or finding the right belly button via phone

electronic media seems to provide for fast and easy communication between parties....especially in that many files are of electronic origin

everything works great

excellent

fast service

Good and easy to use.

Great site

I am happy to see more city and county services and information services available online. In my work, I access the City's GIS and zoning systems regularly. I am also a big fan of the BCAD and Bexar County Clerk's internet databases. I wish that SAWS had a more useful website. It is rather rudimentary and does not include much information useful to the regulated community (industrial wastewater permit, etc.).

I believe that it should be maintained and continue to service our community.

I currently live in Austin. I would like you to share your current system with other cities. I lived in SA for about 28 years and have seen a great improvement. Keep up the good work.

I got information regarding what all was required for permitting, so that I could submit the plans for review with the correct amount of fee if required. Once chosen, the Contractor would then be responsible for the cost of the permit once it had been through the review process. It was a fairly easy process. It is harder to get someone on the phone to speak to in person.

I had the impression that the city took money from me for a garage sale permit, but I was the one that did everything. I logged on, I input the info, I paid, I printed the permit, I posted it at my sale and that was it. The only thing the city was take my money.

I have also had to call the city several times for assistance on construction projects and they have always been very helpful. Thanks for all your hard work!!

I have been having great service emailing my requests and questions to the development services department. All requests are answered very timely and correctly interpreted.

I hope that is stays free.

I like the online service. It is convenient and very informative/useful.

I think that on line permit helps save time and money. I would like to see all Municipalities use this type of system.

I was surprised at how fast I received the permit. I thought that it was going to be a mistake, but it was great.

Information was informative and comprehensive. I especially liked the on line progress report and status of inspections made at the office space where I am have obtained a Certificate of Occupancy.

It gives us a better timeline on the permitting process. By taking some of the delays out of the process, it allows us to expedite our schedule.

It is more efficient than telephone, in person, or correspondence.

It makes it very easy to make applications.

It resolves my questions.

It was an all around, good online experience.

It was definitely a convenient way to find out information for starting a business, without having to drive to an office, therefore wasting gas & time.

It was easy to use and provided the information I needed.

It was real easy to use

It worked out OK. Thanks

It's great that I don't have to go downtown to pull permits or fax DT and wait for days to receive permits.

It's the best - San Antonio is way ahead of other cities in Texas

love on-line versus in-person.

My online experience has been overall good. the few times further explanation was needed the city staff was punctual, informative, open minded and courteous. I approach the permit process professionally and the city staff members have done like wise. So in short, the city on-line experience has been useful, helpful, available night and day and overall a good tool that saves time and effort.

Overall, it's a great service.

Satisfactory

The on-line information is faster than trying to reach someone on the telephone. I was able get an answer right away.

The online permit process has saved me valuable time. It is nice to not have to go to one of the city offices.

The on-line Residential Building Application has been most helpful in expediting our permits and allowing our trade permits to be requested.

The Planning Department GIS Website is very helpful.

THE PROCESS HAS MADE THINGS A LOT EASIER

The system keeps getting better all the time.

this service is fast and efficient

very convenient

very straight-forward

We love the online permitting proses

## **Requests to Expand Service Offerings or Service Needs Not Met**

Automate more services

Because of the lack of available information to citizens on their new home construction permits, I had to call the Development Services office and get the information I needed from an employee. That was OK, but I should be able to get ahold of that information regardless of whether or not I am a registered contractor - it's my house, not the city's.

From what I recall, I found a lot of forms that were useful on [sanantonio.gov](http://sanantonio.gov), but not the regulatory information for which I was looking. I ended up using the telephone numbers found on the development building site to call the office directly and get answers. My question was whether a homeowner, non-contractor, could apply for a permit for remodels on a residential building.

Have more access to public records online.

I am looking for new development as a source for business leads. Construction in a commercial sense means a business that might need my products. Generally speaking, it is difficult to contact these people with the limited amount of information presented. The information is a basis for a physical visit which is time intensive.

I COULD NOT CONDUCT ALL MY BUSINESS ONLINE. I STILL HAVE TO COME IN TO S.A. IN PERSON TO MAKE A REGISTRATION PAYMENT. I HAD TO MAKE PHONE CALLS TO FIND OUT WHY I COULD NOT ACCESS THE ONLINE PERMIT APPLICATION AND I COULD NOT MAKE PAYMENT VIA BANKCARD OVER THE PHONE FOR MY REGISTRATION PAYMENT.

I felt that the on-line service did not address my needs - I had to contact the 'One Stop' by phone. This took longer than I initially expected to get the answer to my questions.

I have changed places of work in the last year and have visited One Stop to modify my account. At this time I remain unable to use the service. The DS folks, as always, have been very polite but we have not resolved the problem.

I have to call in my backflows. There needs to be an option to add it online.

I obtained e-mail addresses of the specific persons in the City that were responsible for the areas that I was seeking data. Then upon e-mailing them with my need for information, they were quick to respond and directed me properly. I then obtained the data in a timely fashion.

I still had to call to find out some other minor questions about restrictions for placing a car port in my home. However everything went pretty well. The individual I spoke with was a young man and he was very helpful helping me understand the process.

I wish there were some way to better troubleshoot these "flags" that pop up when applying for these permits, instead of calling in and waiting for a permit writer, etc.

I would like to be able to research rules and regulations on-line.

inspection requests being available after hours and on weekends. hiring more inspectors to cover cover peak load times

It is very user freindly to pull permits and request inspections. It would be great if we could add to our escrow account on line.

It would be nice to know about future residential and commerecial devoplmnts by name.  
Larry

MORE MORE MORE.....

More on-line services and features

More options available to sign contractors in the dynamic portal. Other contractors have the ability to submit permits online.

Not enough detailed information for the homeowner in experienced with dealing with contractors. I went onto the site before I began my project in January and was unable to find the information that I found out later when it was too late- i.e., homeowner waiver for permit. My contractor told me that this waiver was required in order for the permit to be pulled-he did NOT tell me that if I signed it-he was no longer responsible for meeting city code- I lost \$15000.00 to him because he did not build to code, I fired him right before he was to roof my 700 sq foot room addition without the structure being attached to the existing house-i.e., no straps, roof rafters and decking not nailed or screwed to existing home. I'm told I have no recourse because he was a member of TRCC and he has no assets and I signed a waiver. Your homepage should have a "What every homeowner should know before hiring a contractor" section. I ultimately had to hire a builder to come in and tear down what was built and start over. If you have any advice for me I would appreciate it.

Should have more forms and applications available on-line

SO FAR THE TRAINING AND PREPERATION WAS GREAT ITS THE RIGHT IDEA; HOWEVER THE SITE HAS HAD SOME PROBLEMS, BUT THE TECH SUPPORT HAS BEEN VERY TIMELY IN FIXING THE PROBLEMS

System went down on a Friday afternoon. Occassionally it does not work, mostly it works fine.

The internet site is helpful. However, I think it needs to have an extra questionnaire for us (homeowner's) to double check over contractor's work. We were not approved for framing. The 2nd inspection will cost us and the reason was extremely unfair. We were also told by several other people that the inspector was just too lazy and his requests for the 2nd inspection unfair. Also, I did not like how he referred to a code but did not specify the exact one. (He was trying to imply an existing structure may be bad and we will have to change it.) What code says I HAVE TO CHANGE IT? He needed to specify.

The web site should have a page that would include what the inspectors are looking for. For example: Framing inspection-inspector looks for X. Structure should have X.

this system is sometimes very slow or locks up otherwise it is a very big time saver

Unable to schedule curb/approach inspection. It took being transferref to 3 different people to finally get to someone who could help me. I have also reported on several occasions of an "abandoned car" parked on my parents street for over 6 months with no response.

When applying for trade permits if there is a problem with either the project is in the flood plain, historical or if the building permit is not complete the only message you get is "Letter of Approval Required". If possible I would like to see more information so I don't have to stop and call to find out what the problems are so I could get whatever requirements are needed taken care of faster.

## **Requests to Modify Software to Address Particular User Needs**

After finding the AP# I spent two hours on line trying to find out who I had to talk to, then another 3 days of calling to only be told by each and every person I spoke with that i had to talk to someone else. It was only once I spoke to the city Arborist who palyed fphone tag with me for another day that I got his email address and things were expedited more efficiently. If only that email address had been listed somewhere, my matter could have been resolved a week earlier

An archive of weekly permits would be a great addition to your services.

During the plan review process,it would help to see the dates for each plan review on the summary page. Sometimes it is difficult to find the current reviews due to all the departments are listed several times on the same sheet. It is so cluttered and time consuming to read. It would help to know which department currently is reviewing the documents. In the "old" days there was a summary page showing all the departments and the dates they had received the doucments. With one look I knew the status of the plan review and where the documents were. Thank you. **[name and company name removed]**

I am extremly pleased with the time this process saves us getting permits. It's the final inspections that don't quite give us enough information. Some inspectors require a different presentation and if we knew the inspector that would be inspecting a particular property we could avoid any failed inspections. The failed inspections are one in every fifty jobs, however we would like to have zero failed inspections.

I do like the convenience of the online service. It saves us so much time on checking inpections. I would like to see more information on the sewer applications. For instance, as a foundation contractor we would like to see if a sewer is covered. The current program only tells us if the permit is finalized. Also, we would love to be able to renew our contractors license on-line. That would be a huge improvement. Thank you for your time. **[name and company name removed]**

I had some difficulty when trying to add the mechanical items to the permit. The item would go the list but would not attach itself to the permit request. I was able to get it to work by using the back button. Also, it would be helpful if the delete button for mechanical items would appear as they are added.

I had to cancel the order for the permit, and had no valid means of changing it online. I dad to call in and have it removed manually. However the removal process went very smooth.

I like to obtain permits on line. I would like more options. i.e. to be able to create permits where suites are involved. and to be able to fund an escrow account with a credit card, to name a couple.



I NEED TO BE ABLE TO CORRECT ITEMS I CHOOSE WRONG ONCE YOU ENTER THIS AND GO THROUGH THE PROCESS AND REALIZE YOU MADE A MISTAKE IT IS TOO LATE AND YOU HAVE TO CALL DOWNTOWN TO GET CORRECTED.

I never got the help I needed in order to send a formal complaint about a contractor so now others will be ripped off as well and the city helped make this possible.

I utilized the overall building permit to obtain the mechanical permit on a project in San Antonio. The address & suite # were clearly part of the master permit but the system failed to link the suite # to the trade permit. As a result, the inspector did not show up for the scheduled inspection and I was charged a reinspection fee. In all other Cities, the main permit is linked to the trade permits and there is no need to duplicate information. This newly gained info for the San Antonio system cost a reinspection fee as well as a lost day for a person sitting onsite all day waiting for the inspector to show up. Note: the inspector did not call or even attempt to notify this office. He simply failed the inspection for no suite number and I only found out about it at the end of the day when I attempted to determine what happened with the inspector not arriving for the inspection.

I was looking for all the permits of all mayor residential building companies and only can find permits per company, is there any way to find all the permits issued in certain period of time?

I would like to be able to print actual documents that have been scanned into the system.

If a mechanical contractor needs pricing for a permit for an estimate there should be a form or site that is easy to reach that would provide cost estimates for a projects plumbing - mechanical permits without having to actually apply for those permits.

Thanks, [name removed]

It is virtually impossible to get a permit unless the contractor is given the exact and legal street address. The computers at the Service Center do searches to get the correct address, why isn't this part of the application process?

No matter what I did it would not confirm anything for me.

The experience was fine but there are a few things that need to be tweaked. Such as putting in suite numbers on the permit app. This confuses the inspector and sometimes he fails to get to the right suite and refuses to do the inspection.

The online ordering of Garage Sale Permits should not be included with the other business permits. The information needed is quite different. Also, it would make it much easier if we could choose more than one date at a time. For example October 29th and 30th.

The Online Process needs to: 1) Be more streamlined 2) Be organized better to match the actual process flow (permit/plan reviews, etc.) 3) To have additional links added that provide SPECIFIC information & direction in order to achieve successful results in cases

of FAILED, DISAPPROVED or DENIED Inspections or Plan Reviews (ex.: if a particular code or compliance is not met, add a REFERENCE http Link from the actual UDC that will explain how to achieve compliance) 4) Add a Directory Listing of ALL Departments with Names, Numbers & especially email addresses as an additional means of communication vs. leaving numerous voicemail messages 5) Improve ALL Communication Systems for the public

THE ONLY WAY TO PROCESS AN ONLINE INSPECTION IS IF YOU ARE THE PERSON WHO PICKED UP THE PERMIT. WITH A LARGE COMPANY LIKE OURS WE HAVE A RUNNER PICK THEM UP AND HE DOES NOT DO THE INSPECTIONS, SO WE HAVE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE WHICH MOST OF THE TIME THE INSPECTORS GET THE WRONG INFORMATION THAN WHAT WAS LEFT ON THE VOICE MAIL.

The response denying the request for permit reconsideration was not supportable by reference to zoning standards.

There are ways to make it easier to pull a plumbing permit. It takes too long to have to apply for a plumbing, sewer and gas permit at the same address.

use pdf files to print form when permit is complete

When checking status of inspections as general contractor, I would like to be able to check status on all trade inspections associated to project, with out having to have the individual trade application #.

You should be able to log in to the service one time and then be able to perform multiple tasks without having to constantly sign in.

## **Negative Comments Regarding System, Clarity, and Ease of Use**

Access through A/P number is greatly improved compared to the previous system. Access by other means (street address, etc.) could be improved further.

at times will not work to complete a permit process. if you want to pay for a permit on line.

Clarity of information and a broader range of topics

Developers needs are different than those for someone simply needing a garage sale permit. The application process for garage sale permits should really be simplified.

I actually tried calling the contact person for the map, but apparently there was a problem with the voicemail system. So I called to get her email address, and she is working with me to get what I need, but I think it got put on the back-burner for a while.

I am having some problems scheduling on line inspections. I really like the process though.

I could not find on line how many sets of drawings to submit, and whether or not they needed to be wet stamped.

I had some difficulty finding my way around; however, after locating the area, I feel it was more operator error than anything else.

I tried to schedule an inspection online, but could not find the right place to do so. I ended up having to call it in.

I typically use online only to get started, but pull most information by phone or written request.

I was trying to find any outstanding permits due for a store at the Alamo Quarry Market and when I used the website to look up permits by address, nothing happened on the page. I called a friend of mine in the IT Dept and I was assisted with finding a "back door" into the inspection link. If it is on the website, it should work.

I was trying to find out what was causing the permit to be denied. I had heard varying stories from the Contractor and Architect. But, finding the comments were almost impossible. Without the proper AP number, you might as well give up.

i would like to see it more structured like the state web site; lists of facilities by owner and next inspections due dates.... Otherwise it was nice to see the city come into the web developement for facilities.

If any changes are made with in the one stop center regarding permits, then the outside industries need to know. I have no use for city employees that are rude & impatient.

It doesn't give specifics as to the inspections online and this of course is banking that the inspector updates the notes which they don't in a timely manner

It is nice to be able to get permits after hours or at least at our convenience. The power users that pull permits should be consulted as to how to streamline the computerized permit pulling process, since they are the ones that use it all the time. There is a lot of redundant steps involved and extra key strokes that could and should be removed.

It is sometimes difficult to easily find what you need on-line. If you are not sure where to go, it is difficult to find even with the search engine.

It is very convenient once you learn how to do it. It is not very easy to go thru for a first timer

It was a little complicated. Make it easier to access from one department to another.

It was a little more complicated than it needed to be

Make the purchase of the Garage Sale Permit a little more recognizable. It's a little confusing when logging in.

Many of the questions in the beginning were deceiving like "New Construction" stuff and I kept closing the window because I didn't know if I did it right. So perhaps if you all fixed that it would have made it easier. At HEB they tell you everything you need to know, like how many signs you can have up and for how many days the permit can be used for... and I didn't have a clue with this one.

most of the 'need to know' information is difficult to find and navigate thru

needs to be a little more user friendly.

Needs to be more Address sensitive and / or help you get the parcel number.

not enough information to go by.

On the garage sale issue, I submitted my request and the system indicated there was a problem and that it didn't go thru. So I went to HEB and bought a permit. Then a few weeks later, I got a bill from the City of SA saying I owed them for the garage sale permit. On another issue, I wrote an e-mail thru this website requesting information and never got a response.

online information about garage sale permits should be more explanatory, for instance it did not say that the permit was good for 2 days.

On-line payment process is not reliable. Seems like the website has a lot of technical problems.

Online service did not provide answers to questions.

Search box for City's services and not the printed materials

Service was not meant to be understood by anyone or first time users.

still having trouble pulling up some permits

The dynamic portal was down for some time the last time I tried to schedule an inspection. Once up again, it ran very slow. I have a DSL connection and all of my other on-line business ran as usual, so I can only assume that it was a problem with the City's web site.

The entire permit department, on-line or live, is very difficult to work with. It typically takes 4 to 5 requests to have a permit issued. We have also found that the inspectors are not consistent in their findings. We have found that communicating with this department is very frustrating.

The information we received was incorrect by a week. It needed to be updated. This caused the job to be delayed when no delay was necessary.

the online service is not friendly to users. I was not advised that it saved information. I stopped part way through a permit because I found the date might be wrong. When I went back to correct it I was not allowed because it said I had one already. It should not do that.

The online service needs to update status or have a projected review date. Without that, you still have to call in order to find out when your project will be reviewed.

the online services were slow in manufacturing the proper documentation needed to expedite the process fast enough.

The only difficulty was establishing the correct path to the information I was needing. Once that was in place things went well.

the permit's progress of completion generally is not completely filled out and is not a reliable source of information that it could be if timely updates are entered and narratives are also entered to explain process.

The service needs better explanation of how to pull specialty permits (example: building permits with child permits under the master). The internet service does not need as much improvement as does the personnel that are supposed to help with internet issues. I have yet had a call returned, after over 20 calls for help.

The services listed are very vague. I needed information regarding construction restriction in my residential area but was not able to get a clear answer from the website. I am planning to add sidewalks, patios and fencing to my home. I still do not have an answer to the restrictions enforced by the city for this type of projects.

The site seems to be a little cluttered. I also felt that it was not explanatory enough for 'older folks', my parents specifically.

The software process is written from the perspective of the city; I'm guessing. The process is not at all intuitive to the end user; the builder. The software needs to be designed around the end user; the builder but the city's software is not.

The system did not recognize my contract's number and did not provide any way to pay for a permit.

The system needs to be more user friendly

The web is o.k., could be easier to find permits and comments to your submittal. The numbers listed are useless on web, no one answers phone and more the prompt is very frustrating to use. Then if you leave a voicemail sometimes it takes days to respond and you are not even sure if you left a voicemail with the right person.

The web site is very difficult to navigate and find the items that I am looking for easily!

The website for directing a newcomer to the permit process seemed somewhat confusing and I received the essential phone numbers I needed to understand the preliminary permit review process and called the office to get a better understanding and schedule an appointment. I have not yet started the actual permit submission.

the website is confusing and the fees are hard to find.

there aren't enough "hint" examples to guide you through the process nor enough choices for the types of permit, it was either fence/privacy fence or window/door/gen. remodel or house leveling or reroof and as you know there are many more possibilities of permit situations i.e. cut an emergency exit door & on a non load bearing wall in a residence, small project but permit required, with the current choices you are relegated to have to go to a satellite office or one stop to submit a plan? or try to explain what you are doing only to be told that's not available through the internet permit process

There are still problems with the address issue of the permit system but other than that I think it is great.

There is usually some type of problem in logging on or being able to access the information or page we need to complete our requests.

Too many missing parcels or address. Too many locked out permits for things like having to contact Public Works for a HVAC permit approval because the property is in a 100 yr flood zone??? I must say that the resolution to the problems have been handled more promptly recently.

TOOK TOO LONG TO GET TO WHERE I WAS GOING ON THE SIGHT. IT DID NOT TELL US THAT WE HAD TO HAVE A ESCROW ACCT. DOWN TOWN FIRST. OTHER THAN THAT IT WAS GOOD

Took too long. Too many steps. It should be simpler than ordering a book from Amazon.com. There are limited choices and you have my property records, why can't they be linked.

Under the old on-line look-up system, when one did not have to log in, I could see all the permits that had been approved for a particular residence. Under the new on-line system, which requires me to log on, I have observed that not all of the previously available data transferred over. In fact, several addresses are showing "no permits" even though the homes were built during the timeframe I specified in the on-line query. This is frustrating, especially if I want to verify that a permit was issued for a neighbor's construction project. Now I have to call Development Services to find out. This anomaly between the old and new on-line systems needs to be looked into.

Very difficult to navigate and select the proper department.

very difficult to understand what steps are required.

We get kicked off the site don't know if system takes inspection, permit or not. Then we have to call to confirm it took it. This happens at least once a week or so.

web site was not intuitive; had trouble finding the project and the permits

Well everything went well except i did not know exactly what to post as my garage sale permit so i just used to my receipt showing i paid for a permit online

When changes are made that affect how a permit is pulled, I think that contractors need to be informed. Not spend 30 plus minutes trying to figure it out and then spending another 30 minutes on the phone trying to straighten it out.

when website is down there is no other way to schedule inspections after 4:30.

Wording on status of inspections on project was somewhat vague, leaving questions as to whether process was complete or what was still required. Someone more familiar with the process may not have had any problems with it but this was my first personal experience with it. I like the ability to look this information up at my convenience and the portion of the online system that I accessed (information only, did not apply for a permit or attempt to schedule an inspection) was user-friendly and easy to navigate.

You have to have a password which makes it a hassle if you are looking for general information about construction. If you will visit this website, you can see how easy it is to find square footage, what type of permit, address and cost of construction.

<http://www.cstx.gov/home/index.asp?page=415> or  
[http://www.cstx.gov/docs/september\\_2005.pdf](http://www.cstx.gov/docs/september_2005.pdf)

The original permit request was done by another party and based on this, the on-line service would NOT let me request an inspection. We had to call. We had a mechanical inspection fail "due to no roof access" (no ladder) when we finally got another inspection date and a ladder for the inspector, he DID NOT get up on the roof nor use the ladder.

We make these arrangements from another city and do not find San Antonio's handling of this very professional.



## **Negative Comments Regarding the Related Process, Staff, and Contacting Staff**

Even though we were able to track the progress of the permit, actually getting in touch with a live person was exceptionally frustrating.

I am content with the process that the city has in place with the purchase and/or bid proposal of new property/land that is available throughout the City of San Antonio. However, I am very dissatisfied with the fact that I am not able to obtain a deed to the property I have recently bid and purchased. Apparently, I have to wait until all the new property/land owners complete their payments to the city or complete the required surveys before the completion of paperwork can be presented to City Council. The individual assisting with this process has been very most professional, cordial and helpful. It is the waiting game that I feel the city should address. There is a very short time limit to pay for the bid submitted and it is only a fair system that the city move on the process of getting the new owner their deed versus having to make it convenient for City Council to receive all bid proposal purchases at once. Mayor Hardberger I leave my situation to your capacity to address.

I did end up calling and speaking to the inspector and found him a bit haughty at first, but when I explained nicely that I was trying to help someone who had a problem, he finally became nice. I guess it's easy for them to be suspicious, but I was genuinely trying to be professional with him. Nice counts!

I FEEL THE INSPECTORS UPDATE THIER INSPECTIONS IN A REAL TIME MANOR, THAT ALLOWS ME TO TRACK THE HUNDREDS OF HOUSES I MANAGE. THANK YOU

I have recieved no responce of any kind to help with my problem of not being able to view inspection results for my homes under construction.

I learned after I paid that the cost of my permit was almost double on line than if I had paid at HEB.

I then called and talked to several people. Two said they would look into my question and get back with me. No one ever did.

I was unable to apply online. After applying for a permit over 5 weeks ago, we still do not have a permit to start the work. No inspector has even been out to look at the sign location to issue a permit. The inspectors should be severely looked at. This is ridiculous for a permit to take over 6 weeks to be issued.

I would be very helpful if the inspectors would respond in a timely maner. There is a significant amount of time wasted waiting for an inspector to show up. No communications what so ever from the inspectors.

I would have liked a quicker response. I had to call and check on the status of my request. I also would have preferred a phone call so that someone would have explained things better. Instead I received a letter stating that I would have to pay over a thousand dollars to have my request met. Then I received another letter stating that my request was sent to my then councilman for review. I have not heard anything in months and do not know the current status.

If you make a mistake on the online process, it is very difficult to get anyone in the developmental service to help you fix any problems and they are not very nice about it. Many times you are forced to leave a message and no one returns your phone calls.

It cost more in permit fees to pull an online permit than in person for Irrig. permits. This should not be if you want people to use online services. I complained, and the solution was for me to call a person within developmental services to add the backflow to my irrig permit instead of pulling 2 permits online. Kind of defeats the purpose.

It has been a few months so some of the details I've forgotten. I attempted to get a garage sale permit via internet and it never was sent to me. So I called a phone number for the department that deals with this, had to leave a voice mail for someone to call me. No one ever did. I gave up on having the garage sale, but was tempted to do it without the permit but figured it would be my luck to get fined by the city.

It is okay for some things but I prefer to speak to someone personally.

It seems that the communication between the offices and the inspectors is not always thorough. The internet system is wonderful, but it didn't really have the flexibility I needed for my project. The people were very helpful, respectful, & conscientious.

It started with a conversation with the head of mechanical permits - Mr. Maldonado. The system is rigged so that mechanical contractors can charge the residential customer administrative and permitting fees, and then never pay the city their fees. It reeks of corruption and "brother-in-law" deals. I'll be glad to explain this endemic problem with someone at any time. In the meantime, I believe it is important that you, the Mayor, take immediate action to clean up the featherbedding and corruption in our city government departments. [name removed]

It was actually a telephone request and it was not good. A work order was assigned for July and I was informed that I would be contacted regarding the inspection. I was not and then I went through several people before I finally got the results and the inspection was pitiful. There is a life safety issue with the sidewalks around Rosa Verde and the notes I was read did not indicate any problems and that the City was not accountable for the sidewalk situation. I would very much like to have someone else inspect the property and provide me with information regarding the bricks on Houston St. that are causing a tripping problem and how they should be repaired and who should repair them.

It's not the online system that's the problem. The problem is the inspectors themselves and trying to get anything done. When a permit is called in for inspection we leave a name and contact phone # for the inspector to schedule an appointment with the homeowner.

The inspector will attempt to contact the homeowner once if they don't get an answer they will leave a message saying they will need to reschedule and not leave a return phone # for the homeowner to contact them. Then they will FAIL the inspection even though they have never been to the job site and an inspection was never performed. If they see a chance to get out of doing their job, they will.

I've submitted permits 2-3 yrs. Online experience isn't the whole picture. Was told sign permits take 2 days by Simpson & Pena. It's a bureaucracy it takes longer. They are bureaucrats and are interested in protecting their image. People see right through them. Pena has even lied to me and a customer and about me. I've waited a month plus for that permit. Simpson doesn't give straight answers. Sign permitting/code enforcement is understaffed and poorly managed. Nothing has really improved for their staff or businesses in the last 2-3 years. Having an online service doesn't qualify everything. Zip code question is poorly written. Sign companies permit in all zip codes.

Most of the issues I have concerns with concern the Planning/Historic Preservation Office. The HPO and Planning Director seem less interested in the City of San Antonio, founded in 1718, than in following guidelines, in place, being forthright and/or genuinely interested. Even face to face meetings are fruitless. I fully realize this Department is not part of the Development Services Department, however, in my experience and supported by documentation presented to J. Burley, this Department needs assistance. Most of my dealings with Development Services have concerned Zoning and John Jacks has always responded promptly and answered questions; his performance and assistance is exemplary.

My on-line experience was to contact the correct personnel who could help me with my concern. I was transferred between groups until I finally talked with the right person. The drainage issue is on-going. We are working with Development Services as well as our city council representative.

My overall experience with trying to get an electrical permit with the city was very frustrating. This was an ongoing issue that I felt should have been resolved within a few weeks at the most.

My wife and I have put in MULTIPLE requests for a code compliance officer to look into code compliance violations at 226 E Craig Place, 78212. Our neighbor has five (5) "junked" vehicles in his driveway that have not moved since we moved in, which was almost two years ago. We have submitted several online requests as well as telephone requests for a code compliance officer to remedy this situation. Nothing has changed. We have become very frustrated with the response (or lack thereof) to this problem. Please help!!!

On-line, I found what I needed about permits which have not been brought to closure. On the phone, I left messages day after day after day. Over a period of 14 months, I finally have it down to one permit still open. When I visit One Stop I find people to be friendly. It just takes many visits and phone calls to get issues resolved. I realize that it is a contractor's job to put closure to their projects. However, strange things happen. For

example, CPS pulled permits on our address for the Mission Parkway Project and didn't complete the process, until after various phone calls of inquiry and requests for assistance. Request that any entity taking out a permit on our address inform resident or business of the fact.

Plan reviews need improvement on the time it takes to approve. Plumbing inspections department need friendlier and contact information for inspectors.

The Fire Department is unresponsive to requests for information relating to fire inspections and outstanding fire code violations. Other cities provide prompt access to FD inspectors, but SAFD ignores emails and phone calls.

The first thing is you need to get a live person to pick up the phone. The second thing is to get the Development Services personal to loose the " God like attitude" they have. Charging a five hundred dollar fee for a temporary occupancy certificate because of "record keeping fee" is a joke. Charging "after hours fee" so the people will do thier job faster is is a Joke. We were a small prostant church trying to get a new building built and we had to jump through hoops fpr the city, pay \$3000.00 a acre for " storm water run off fee" while the the big boys do not have to pay anything, cut all the trees down and we get threats of fines if we do not put protection around four trees.If it had not been for being able to find five or six people that were doing thier jobs with respect, understanding, talk to you like you are human. I will guess from March 2005 until August 2005 I made at least 200 phone calls to Developement Services. One day I took the phone directory for Developement Services and I called twenty numbers at random. I did not get one live person to pick up a phone. I got four messages that the person did not work there anymorer or had transfered. City Public Service is just as bad, they want your maoney rtight away but they take thier time to give the dervice you paid for. They make money off your money and do not provide the service until they feel like it. I did this work for my church and I will not want to deal with the City of San Antonio again to build a church building.

The first time, I did not get anywhere, then I Emailed District #, still nothing, then called 311, who gave us another number to call, then after 2 days we were called back and told yet another area would need to answer our question, then when we got to that person, they took all the information, said they would get back to us and never did, I recently re Emailed district # again, this time someone came from that office, but we missed talking to each other in person, but they said they drove the area, and would report the situation,

The health department seems to have communications problems between the Inspectors and the people running the office. This can lead to many problems as well as frustration for businesses trying to get licensed.

THE ON LINE SERVICE IS O.K., BUT THE TELEPHONE SERVICE IS AWFUL. IF YOU CALL THEM BY PHONE, THE SERVICE STINKS.

The online experience was irritating and frustrating. Telephone contact with the dept. were worse. The right hand did not know what the left hand was doing. Code inspectors, supervisors, office staff provided poor service.

The on-line is ok but our experience with trying to get problems straightened out by phone has been almost nil!! Also, some of the permits we get are not charged to us for 6 to 9 months & sometimes longer. It makes bookkeeping difficult.

The online process is fine. The problem is San Antonio does not have a time limit for the reviewer to review a set of plans. Austin has defined review time limits - typically three weeks. This is what your city needs. Also, the preliminary plan review panel needs to coordinate with the actual plan reviewers - we are told we can do certain things at the PPR meeting that the actual reviewers won't allow. All in all, your city is striving to provide better service to the builders and developers. Some changes need to be made to the current system, but you are on the right track.

The people may be OK and the service level OK but the written procedures and instructions are non existant. If they worked, there would be less impact on the employees and users.

The real problem lies within the system starting at all the department heads. The city does little if any true on site inspection, the city has merly become another taxing intity at the development services level. If you are truely interested please feel free to call my office for specific information [phone number removed]

There is no communication between the city and CPS when trying to request a permit in order to get utilities turned back on by CPS. We have to get a temporary C of O for vacancies and request inspections and the experience has never been easy nor accommodating and usually takes an excessive amount of time.

too much paperwork involved -when a Supreem Court decision allows the construction of Ham Radio Towers

very frustrating, received absolutly no help even after I made numerous phone calls, most all calls never returned, people I did reach did not know to whom to direct me with the problems, lots of passing the buck and unwilling or wanting to help

When Neighborhood Associations report violations to Developmental Services regarding no permit, they send it to Code Compliance. The wait for the investigation is over 2 weeks. By the time they get to it, the work is completed and they rarely file against the perpretrators. Building Inspection is the same. What good is a reporting system that does not work? Case in point is 522 W. Huisache. Lady was told to stop construction becuase she did not meet Conservation standards. She went ahead and finished it. What good is a Conservation District overlay, if it is not enforced?

When requesting a permit I can not log in for both Irrigation & Double Check Valve w/ out calling in to Alicia Vo requesting she add my backflow for me. This is somewhat redundant, cant it be set up to pick one or the other w/ permit for irrigation, meaning Pick

one to add either Double Check or RPZ which ever is required. Having to call in is missing the point of on line services, for you & for me.

Your multiple choice question did not include phone service which is what actually happened. I was very well please this time. Last year when I tried calling the Devel. Center, I could never get thru to a person. This year when I left a voice mail I got a call back with all the info that I needed from Rudy Cantu.

## **Miscellaneous Comments and Recommendations for Policy Changes**

1. The man power issue for inspection in general is terrible we are constantly being put behind schedule due to the waiting time for inspections. 2. Ask the city manager why does the Fire Marshall's office have less people than they did 5 years ago? 3. Why does the average inspector have 150 inspections a day? 4. Why does a town as big as San Antonio have half the number of inspectors than a town like Dallas when San Antonio is about the same size? The previous administration was too weak to take on this issue. What Will You Do Mr. Hardberger? This inability to be able to provide the service to match the construction growth of the city will eventually blow up in some one face. When construction goes away to another city because of these problems what will you be able to say you did to change things?

Did this lower my taxes by taking your survey. However, development needs to be curtailed over the ERZD area.

Florencio Pena III, director has always responded to my questions very promptly, please thank him for me. Cathy Ohler

GREAT JOB MAYOR.

I am a Facility Engineer/Manager with Lockheed Martin and I deal with GKDA.

I am a very small contractor and would like to see more work or a new unit that would be 25,000.00 and under along with your 25,000.00 and over

I am confused in the launching of my business. I will wait until I move to SA next month.

I had contacted my city councilman regarding the noise affecting our neighborhood and a program that I had heard about replacing windows in homes affected by the noise. I heard from Councilman Haas' office within 24 hours and was given the information for the point of contact regarding that issue. I spoke with a gentleman in the Noise Abatement Office who was EXTREMELY helpful and although we do not fall within the borders, he was extremely courteous and helpful.

I have been trying to get someone to address trees that are growing in the city easement behind my house and knocking my fence down but I cannot get anyone to even look at the situation.

I need to spend some time with this

I used your online service to look up building permits for an inaccessible restaurant. I have found several building permits that have been issued to business owners who did not abide by accessibility regulations. The City should educate the inspectors to look into accessibility. Our city is very behind in the times when it comes to accessibility. The city

has an obligation to insure that businesses comply with regulations that insure that all citizens are allowed to use public accommodations and government services.

I want action. The violator is still not complying with code compliance rules. Junk cars still in driveway and in the backyard.

I want us to continue having strong ordinances that protect our City. The clear cutting that developers are allowed is a disgrace. Why when some of the plats are 10 years or older are they allowed through vested rights. I hope the you will do something through the legislature to change that a plat and master plan must be acted on within 5-10 years otherwise you start over. Otherwise, I am very pleased with the services that City staff provide. I am very pleased with our new Mayor as well.

I would have used it but I am only a one time builder not a developer

It's hard to answer your survey since you did not have an answer block for service requested through fax. I can say that the service provided through the fax machine is quick and efficient. The tree arborist all answer back in a quick and timely manner. Their advice and authorization is necessary and important to us.

My client waited over 45 days for the completion of a building plan review and was only when he contacted a "friend" in the review department that we received complete response. Furthermore, a "novice" plan reviewer in the traffic engineering dept over rode a Texas DOT ruling regarding curb cuts and delayed the job and additional two weeks till we received a letter from TDOT to clear up the matter. I represent a chain of franchise restaurants entering the Texas Market. We entered five other building departments for plan review after the submittal to San Antonio. Most are well under way for building completion. We've just begun construction in San Antonio.

MY CONTRACTOR I HIRED KEPT MY MONEY AFTER I LET HIM GO. I TRIED TO PUT A COMPLAINT AGAINST HIM AND HE NEVER GOT A PERMIT, SO I WAS UNABLE TO. AND I WAS TOLD THAT I HAVE NO RECOURSE. I COULD TAKE HIM TO SMALL CLAIMS COURT.

n/a

Never get a garage permit ON-LINE!!!

no

None, at this time

nothing

Nothing much - I'm actually in Castle Hills, and was just comparing zoning laws with CH and SAT



SAN ANTONIO IS MISSING OUT ON THE FEES FOR PERMITS.MOST CONTRACTORS DO NOT GET PERMITS. RAISE THE FINE FOR NOT HAVING A PERMIT.

Thanks for being proactive as mayor. We as small business need all the cost and time services that the city has establish. I would like to invite you stop by our office/shop if you could fit into your busy schule. The South Texas Business Fund helped grow our business. We have used City fund **[name and company name removed]**

the garage sale permit I received was good for the day I proposed for \$15. Unfortunately my husband had a relapse of his cancer unexpectedly and we were unable to have it that day. I wish the permit would have been good for one year as I am now out \$15.

The price on the permit is just too high. If it is raining you want us to do it another time, okay but we have to pay additional money for it. That is ridiculous.

There was no telephone/email option. The only issue that was addressed was the street and I called 311 about that. The other issue I had which is constant water under my house and two of my neighbors houses was not properly investigated and never addressed. I was told by Councilman Flores' office that there was a natural spring under my house and that the city would not aid in fixing it because if they did and it broke down they would be responsible for fixing it. It has taken more than a year total and I finally had an answer from the 3rd SAWS rep to come out here last week. He said there is no natural spring here. He said the problem is my neighbors at 1324 W. Woodlawn installing a 5 ton air conditioning unit and the pvc pipes they had coming out from the condenser unit being butted right up against my driveway. You can easily see that the concrete where those pipes are is coming up and the concrete closest to my house is sinking. I called building inspections and they sent someone out but I never heard back and I heard my neighbor tell them she has had it that way for some time. Well, the water under my house has been there for some time! Since I have not gotten a call back and since my neighbor has not done anything to fix the problem I am assuming the city sided with them. I am a widow of a 27 year vet with 2 children at home to raise. I am on disability. Although we are by no means starving here, I do not have money to replace my foundation every couple of years because of the woman next door. According to one of the neighbors making this complaint, this has happened before I even moved in. There are mosquitos everywhere. SAWS said the city's health department would come out and spray but when I called I was told they would not as it is on private property. So as far as I am concerned, calling the city for help with a very important issue is useless.

yes it take too long get heb to lower there price if they dont they will be out of bis.walmart to big it killing the old men and women and there only sell junk there make in china dam ! it not as good as usa made !